

Floor Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
S. 2012, the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016
May 25, 2016

It has been nearly a decade since we last considered an energy package like this, and in that time a lot has changed. Continued innovation and discovery across the energy sector have brought about a new landscape of abundant supply and tremendous potential for economic growth. This has been a multi-year, multi-Congress effort, and a lot of work has gone into making sure that the bill we put forward to support the future of American energy is truly comprehensive. Together with my colleagues, I am proud to be moving this legislation one step closer to becoming the new reality for energy producers and consumers across the country.

This bill is about jobs. It's about keeping energy affordable. It's about boosting our energy security, here and across the globe. H.R. 8 is the embodiment of an all-of-the-above energy strategy. It focuses on modernizing and protecting critical energy infrastructure, including the electric grid, from new threats including severe weather from climate, cyber threats, and physical attacks.

It helps to foster and promote new 21st century energy jobs by ensuring DOE and our labs and universities work better together to train the energy workforce and entrepreneurs of tomorrow. It makes energy efficiency, including federal government energy efficiency a priority, and focuses less on creating new mandates and subsidies to incentivize behavior and more on market changes and using the government as an example.

And finally it helps update existing laws that bring some added certainty to permitting processes and helps to promote using our abundant resources to aid in diplomacy.

For example, by streamlining the approval process for projects such as interstate natural gas pipelines and LNG export facilities, the legislation will allow businesses at the cutting edge of research to keep putting the full scope of American energy abundance to work for consumers both here and abroad.

Provisions within H.R. 8 and others that have been included in the amendment under consideration today also seek to capitalize on energy sources the administration has rejected. H.R. 8 brings much needed reforms to the hydropower licensing process as well, a clean energy source that together with nuclear, provides 25% of U.S. electricity with no greenhouse gas emissions. Its imperative hydropower remains a vital part of any future energy mix.

The all-of-the-above strategy also means that the future of American energy does not need to be a series of choices between the environment and the economy. By introducing 21st-century regulatory reforms that reflect our energy abundance, and with the Department of Energy's Quadrennial Energy Review as a guide, H.R. 8 will help bring about needed reforms and continued innovation across the energy sector.

The legislation before us today is the product of a thorough assessment of the gap we face today between our stale energy regulations and our budding energy supply. H.R. 8 closes this gap. It approaches the challenge of energy security and broader economic prosperity from the perspective of innovation. It balances concerns for the safety of our environment with the security of our jobs, and the American people come out on top. While we face an uphill climb in enacting comprehensive energy legislation, I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate and my friends across the aisle to enact meaningful reforms that truly make a difference for folks in Michigan and across the country.